

## **Memorandum of Understanding**

Between

\_\_\_\_\_ Charter School and  
the Newark Board of Education

### **Newark Universal Enrollment System**

The Parties to this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) agree to the following sections, which will govern the operation of a **Universal Enrollment System** in Newark in the 2018-2019 school year for 2019-20 enrollment for all Local Education Agencies (LEAs) who choose to opt into this system.

This document refers to policies and procedures for the execution of a single admissions process for all participating LEAs. Over the course of the 2018-19 school year, this MOU will be supplemented with additional policies and procedures governing the process for ongoing enrollment. Those policies and procedures may require approval from each LEA's governing body.

As this MOU is an agreement between an LEA and the Newark Board of Education, all statements within this document pertain to the LEA as a whole (i.e., the sum of individual schools) and not each individual school, unless otherwise stated.

### **Section 1: Objectives of the Universal Enrollment System**

The Universal Enrollment System is part of a broader vision that aims to ensure access to great schools for all families across each neighborhood in Newark. This vision is held in common for district and charter schools. Seven guiding principles govern all policy decisions found in this agreement:

- A. Transparency: All participating LEAs, whether district or charter, should share a common set of rules and preferences that are clearly communicated to families.
- B. Choice: The primary determinant of where students enroll in school should be the choice that they and their families make for which school can best meet their needs.
- C. Equity: The distribution of high-needs students should be equitable across all LEAs in Newark.
- D. Access: Students with the highest need should have greater preference to attend a school of their choice, whether it is in their neighborhood or not.
- E. Community: All else equal, students should be able to attend a school close to where they live if that is their preference.
- F. Ease: Families should only have to manage one timeline and one application to enroll their children in school.
- G. Reliability: LEAs should be able to rely on the enrollment results they get for planning and budgeting, knowing that students are not holding offers at multiple schools.

### **Section 2: Grade Level Participation**

- A. The Universal Enrollment System will govern the school assignment process for students in all

grades, Pre-K to 12 inclusive, for enrollment in the 2019-20 school year.

- B. Any student, in any grade level, is permitted to submit an application in the winter/spring of 2018-2019 if they want to enroll in a different school for the 2019-20 school year. However, grade level decisions will be honored by a student's new school in the event that a student is matched to a new school and was, for example, retained by the student's previous school.
- C. Three groups of students are required to submit an application if they want to attend a school that is part of a participating LEA:
  - 1. Students who are enrolling in a Newark public school for the first time
  - 2. Students who have reached the terminal grade of their school/LEA, and who will matriculate to the next grade
  - 3. Students who wish to transfer to a new school
- D. However, students who wish to stay within their current school, and whose school offers the grade level the student will attend in 2019-20, have the right to remain and do not have to submit an application.
- E. Pre-K programs that are based in public LEAs that opt-in will participate in the process for the 2018-19 school year for 2019-2020 enrollment.

### **Section 3: Assignment of Students**

- A. Students who are living in the city of Newark are eligible to enroll in school through the Universal Enrollment System. Students who do not live in the city of Newark may also apply through the Universal Enrollment System, but will only be enrolled in schools they are eligible to attend and may only attend once all possibilities to enroll Newark residents for the 2019-2020 school year have been exhausted. An exception to this will be if some participating LEAs have a Region of Residence charter that authorizes them to grant equal priority to students outside of Newark, in which case those participating LEAs may be assigned students living within their designated geographic area. In addition, siblings of students who are currently enrolled in Newark schools and who live outside the city of Newark would still be eligible to enroll in their sibling's school through the Universal Enrollment System.
- B. Families will submit a separate application for each student. For each student, families will be asked to choose among participating LEAs to rank order the schools they would like their child/children to attend. Families with students who are siblings in different grade levels applying to attend new LEAs/schools in the same school year can be considered for placement together.
- C. The application will allow a maximum of eight (8) schools to be ranked.
- D. Applications will be accepted within a specified time period, and the assignment process will be conducted for all families after that period ends. Families will not receive preferential treatment based on the date or time of their application submission, provided that it is submitted before the deadline.
- E. A computer-based algorithm will generate a single school assignment for each student. This assignment will be based on the family's ranking of schools, the number of applications submitted, and the preferences outlined in Section 4 of this MOU. The results of this algorithm

will generate the best possible match for each student.

- F. In the case of participating LEAs that operate multiple schools within Newark, it will be at the discretion of those LEAs to determine whether families will apply to an individual school or to the LEA overall. In the latter case, the individual LEA would then assign students who had received an offer to the LEA to schools within their network.
- G. Each student who submits an application and is successfully matched to a school/LEA will receive one assignment.

#### **Section 4: Preferences Guiding Assignment of Students**

In the student assignment process, students will receive preference to schools/LEAs according to a specific set of criteria.

- A. Family Rankings – The primary criteria used to place students in the Universal Enrollment System are school/LEA rankings that are submitted by each family. Every seat offered in the universal enrollment system is open to any grade-appropriate student who has included the school on their application. Student applications are processed in random order. Every student is assigned a random number, and applications are processed in that order. Preferences are applied as each student is processed based on their random order. There is no group of students that will be assigned before any other group of students.
- B. All other preferences apply only when the number of students who rank a school/LEA exceeds the number of available seats at that school/LEA in that grade level.
- C. Preference for Siblings
  - 1. Students who have a sibling currently attending a school they rank in their application will receive a preference to be admitted to that school, with the exception of Newark Public School magnet schools.
  - 2. The student will receive preference if a sibling attending a given school will continue to be enrolled in that LEA in the following school year, with the exception of Newark Public School magnet schools.
  - 3. Multiples (twins, triplets, etc.) who express a preference to be placed together will be treated as one offer in the assignment process. If one multiple receives an offer, the other multiple(s) will receive an automatic offer to the same school, with the exception of Newark Public School magnet schools.

4. Families with students who are siblings in different grade levels applying to attend new LEAs/schools in the same school year will be considered for placement together if the family indicates a preference to keep their students together through the application, with the exception of Newark Public School magnet schools. If one of the students is matched to a school of choice, his/her sibling(s) will be given a preference to be matched to the same school. However this sibling preference will have a lower priority than that given to applicants who have existing siblings in the same school.
5. Families with multiple siblings applying to attend new LEAs/schools in the same school year may continue to select “sibling link” to express their preference for matching their multiple students in the same school, even if doing so means matching siblings to a lower choice on their applications, with the exception of Newark Public School magnet schools.

D. Preference for High Need Students

1. In addition to sibling preference, the system utilizes a preference structure to help ensure that all schools are serving all students equitably. The structure is designed to increase the likelihood that all schools serve a similar proportion of high needs students. Specifically, for the purposes of the Universal Enrollment System, “high need” students are defined as:
  - a) Students who have an IEP
  - b) Students who are eligible for bilingual education programs
  - c) Students who are eligible for free lunch

To accomplish this, the preference structure boosts the chances of students who have IEPs or are English language learners or eligible for Free Lunch in the cases where those students are underrepresented in the applicant pool compared to the citywide average in entry grades. In non-entry grades, the preference structure boosts the chances of applicants who have IEPs or are English language learners or eligible for Free Lunch in the school/grade level they are applying to in which existing high needs students are underrepresented compared to the city-wide average.

2. For students who have not been eligible for free lunch in the past – e.g. students applying to pre-kindergarten for the first time – the Universal Enrollment System will attempt to collect data that mirrors the criteria for free lunch eligibility, and will assign students a high need preference based on that data. The specific parameters of this data collection will be developed in collaboration with participating LEAs.
3. For students who have not been eligible for an IEP in the past, participating LEAs may elect to consider alternative criteria that allow students to receive this high needs preference.
4. For English language learners, the Universal Enrollment System will implement a screening process, including a home-language survey and an English language proficiency test, to determine English language proficiency of students whose native language is other than English.
5. For a given LEA, the high needs preference will apply only to high need students who have ranked the school on their application, maintaining the overall prioritization of student and family choice as a guiding principle. As applications are processed, students

with high needs (students with an IEP and students receiving Free Lunch), and students eligible for ESL or bilingual education programs) have a higher chance of securing seats in the schools of their choice if they are underrepresented in that school's applicant pool relative to the city-wide average for that grade level in entry grades. If students with high needs are not underrepresented in a school's applicant pool for entry grades, the system will not boost these students' chances of securing seats. In this case we expect that the population of high needs students assigned to that school will be similar to or greater than the citywide average because students are assigned randomly. For example:

School A Example	School B Example	School C Example
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. School A has open seats in 9<sup>th</sup> grade.</li> <li>b. City-wide, 15% of 9th graders have an IEP.</li> <li>c. Of all 9<sup>th</sup> grade applicants to School A, 5% have an IEP.</li> <li>d. Those 9th grade applicants who have an IEP will have a much better chances of being matched to School A than will students without IEPs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. School B has open seats in 9th grade.</li> <li>b. City-wide, 15% of 9th graders have an IEP.</li> <li>c. Of all 9th grade applicants to School B, 13% have an IEP.</li> <li>d. Those 9th grade applicants who have an IEP will have slightly better chances of being matched to School B than will students without IEPs, but would not have as much of a preference as the applicants with IEPs who are seeking seats in School A.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. School C has open seats in 9<sup>th</sup> grade.</li> <li>b. City-wide, 15% of 9th graders have an IEP.</li> <li>c. Of all 9<sup>th</sup> grade applicants to School C, 20% have an IEP.</li> <li>d. 9th grade applicants with an IEP will <u>not</u> have a higher chance of getting into School C than will students without an IEP. Because students are assigned to the school randomly, we expect that approximately 20% of the total students who are matched to 9<sup>th</sup> grade in School C will have an IEP, even in absence of a preference.</li> </ul>

6. In non-entry grades, the preference will be applied in cases in which the existing student body's high needs population is underrepresented compared to the city-wide average. For example:

School D Example	School E Example	School F Example
<p>a. School D has a few open seats in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade; the majority of their 2<sup>nd</sup> graders are staying for the next school year.</p> <p>b. City-wide, 15% of 3<sup>rd</sup> graders have an IEP.</p> <p>c. 5% of rising 3<sup>rd</sup> graders in School D have IEPs.</p> <p>d. Those 3<sup>rd</sup> grade applicants who have an IEP will have much better chances of being matched to School D than will students without IEPs.</p>	<p>e. School E has a few open seats in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade; the majority of their 2<sup>nd</sup> graders are staying for the next school year.</p> <p>f. City-wide, 15% of 3<sup>rd</sup> graders have an IEP.</p> <p>g. 13% of rising 3<sup>rd</sup> graders in School E have IEPs.</p> <p>h. Those 3<sup>rd</sup> grade applicants who have an IEP will have slightly better chances to be matched to the school than will students without IEPs.</p>	<p>e. School F has a few open seats in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade; the majority of their 2<sup>nd</sup> graders are staying for the next school year.</p> <p>f. City-wide, 15% of 3<sup>rd</sup> graders have an IEP.</p> <p>g. 30% of rising 3<sup>rd</sup> graders in School F have IEPs.</p> <p>h. Those 3<sup>rd</sup> grade applicants with an IEP will <u>not</u> have a higher chance of getting into School F than will students without an IEP.</p>

- a) There is no “floor” or “quota.” In other words, the system does not require that a certain number or percentage of seats be filled by students with an IEP and/or students qualifying for free lunch. Students will not be “force placed” into any school to ensure that a minimum is met. Students will only be assigned to schools they applied to, and family choice is the primary factor in determining where students are assigned. For example, if a school does not have any applicants that meet the high-needs preference but has many other applicants, all seats in the school will be filled by those other applicants.
  - b) There is no “cap.” In other words, the system does not stop filling seats with high needs students once a certain number or percentage of seats have been filled (see School B example). The preference structure merely gives a preference to these two groups of students if those students are underrepresented in the applicant pool.
7. Magnet schools will be allowed to rank students based on their own admissions criteria, which will be designed in the spirit of equity. Magnet student placements will adhere to high-need preferencing established in the MOU. Sibling preference and sibling link will not be applied to magnet schools through the matching process. However, magnet schools may have access to information related to sibling relationships as part of the data provided for ranking purposes.
  8. Students with a limited set of low-incidence disabilities will be able to work directly with the System Administrator to express their preferences and ensure they receive an assignment to a school with the appropriate services to meet their needs. These students may include but are not limited to: students with autism, students who are blind or deaf, students who are medically fragile, students with multiple disabilities, and

students with cognitive impairments. For these students, participating LEAs share a vision that some schools – including both district and charter – should develop expertise around serving particular low-incidence disabilities, and that students with these disabilities would be given specific preference to attend those schools.

E. Neighborhood Preference

1. The neighborhood preference applies for grades pre-kindergarten through 8 only. High schools will have the option to choose to have the geographic preference applied.
2. For seats with more demand than availability given all other preferences, the geographic preference will apply such that up to 100% of the available seats in any school will be preferred for students who live in the hub in which the school is located and who have ranked the school on their application.
  - a) Any student can apply to any school that serves the grade level the student needs.
  - b) If there is an insufficient number of students from within the hub that have applied to a school where geographic preference is applied, seats would be filled by other applicants. The geographic preference only ensures that those students who live in the hub have a higher preference to be matched than students who do not live in the hub.
3. Hubs will be defined based on recognized neighborhood boundaries, and each hub will consist of a combination of existing Newark Public Schools catchment areas. Hubs will also be divided into sub-hubs containing a sub-set of schools within the larger hub to provide students living in the closest vicinity to the sub-set of schools with the highest geographic preference to attend those schools. Students who live in the other sub-hubs within the larger hub will also have a preference to attend these schools, however this preference will be lower than that given to students who live within the sub-hub.
4. A draft that establishes eight hubs and their sub-hubs is included in this MOU's appendix. Hubs and sub-hubs are determined based on factors including geographic size of hub, number of schools and their grade level configurations within the hub, number of seats historically available for each grade level to ensure sufficient number of seats.
5. The neighborhood preference will not take priority over the preference for siblings or high need students. In any case where the algorithm that assigns students cannot meet both the targets for high need student preference and the 100% target for neighborhood preference, priority will be given to meeting targets for high need student preference. In other words, the 100% of seats from the local hub will only be filled if doing so does not interfere with the ability to achieve equitable access for high need students.
6. The existing Newark Public School policies on the availability of transportation will not change as a result of this preference.
7. In the event that any student does not receive an assignment to one of his/her ranked schools, students will be placed in their current school provided that the school serves the student's next grade. A student who is not able to be placed back in his/her current school because the school does not offer their grade level needed will be given the option to accept a default placement in a school within his/her hub, based on the

availability of seats and proximity to his/her home. NPS reserves the right to exceed the match target or adjust the geographic preference of any individual district school as required to respect families' choice to attend a neighborhood school.

8. LEAs would be able to opt out of the neighborhood preference for any school that is not in a permanent location.
9. LEAs receiving Charter School Program funding from the US Department of Education will be exempt from having the geographic preference applied.

## **Section 5: The Application and Recruitment Process**

- A. The System Administrator is responsible for creating an application that will collect all student information that is necessary to determine student preferences and grant an offer of enrollment. All schools will be displayed alphabetically in the application, in such a way that provides equal prominence to all participating LEAs.
- B. The application will provide information about schools/LEAs that opt to participate in the system.
- C. The application guidebook will list the name, address, hub, grade levels served, and an approximation of seat availability by grade level in the previous school year for each participating school. Participating LEAs that choose to have families apply to the LEA overall instead of individual schools may choose to have their schools listed together in the application.
- D. All participating LEAs will be given ample opportunity to review and provide feedback on all aspects of the application materials before they are finalized and distributed.
- E. Individual LEAs may conduct their own marketing and recruitment efforts. All schools of participating LEAs will provide multiple opportunities for prospective/interested students to visit each school prior to the application deadline. All participants in the system are also expected to promote the Universal Enrollment System as the sole avenue by which students may enroll in a participating LEA.
- F. Families will be able to submit their application in one of three ways:
  1. Completing the application online themselves through an online portal.
  2. Providing the application directly to a participating school.
  3. Providing the application to NPS central office or satellite enrollment center.
- G. There will be a single technology system in which all participating schools/LEAs can input data for applications and view aggregate data on the number of students who have applied to their LEA. Participating schools/LEAs will have real-time access to this data through a secure user login.
- H. If applications are submitted directly to a participating school, LEAs will be responsible for entering the application data into the technology system by the submission deadline.
- I. For applications submitted right before the deadline, there will be a window of several days for LEAs to complete data entry.
- J. The System Administrator will provide LEAs with data showing the number of students citywide in each grade who have ranked a school within the LEA #1, #2, #3, etc.
- K. Schools will be responsible for:
  1. Validating the information of applicants who are claiming sibling preference.
  2. Working with students in terminal grades who have not submitted an application to



ensure that they do so by the submission deadline.

- L. The System Administrator will work directly with families whose students do not receive an initial school match but who need new schools to secure a seat at a district or charter school with seat availability that meets their needs and respects geographic preference of the family.
- M. If a participating charter school has set its target of available match seats below the state-approved cap or the equivalent if not fully expanded, and not enough open seats citywide exist for new students, the System Administrator may reach back out to the LEA to inquire about continued placement of students in that school up to the cap.
- N. Under the Universal Enrollment System, all participating LEAs should be able to reach their targeted enrollment levels, provided that there is sufficient demand for those seats from families. Any participating LEA that does not fill its available seats through the assignment process will have the ability to recruit families for ongoing enrollment at the Family Support Center or through the Family Enrollment Portal, the direct online enrollment system.
- O. The system will ensure that all participating LEAs will be able to maintain their targeted enrollment levels, provided there is sufficient demand for those seats, via waitlists or another mechanism to allow backfilling by schools.

## **Section 6: Ongoing Student Enrollment**

After the application window has closed and school matches have been released, there will be three (3) mechanisms by which students can change schools and new students can enroll in school: 1) through waitlists; 2) through a direct enrollment online portal; and 3) through the Family Support Center.

### **A. Waitlists:**

#### **1. Charter Schools:**

- a) Consistent with NJAC 6A:11-4.5, charter schools are required to have waitlists for grade levels in which there are more applicants than seats available.
- b) Applicants who submitted an application that included charter schools who were not able to be matched to charter schools that were listed higher than the school they were matched to will automatically be added to the waitlists for those charter schools.
- c) Students on waitlists will be ordered randomly within three groups: siblings, all non-sibling Newark applicants, and Non-Newark. The exceptions to this are Region of Residency charters in which the students on the waitlist will be ordered randomly within two groups: siblings and all non-siblings from the communities that the charter serves.
- d) During and after the registration window, charters may offer seats that become open to siblings and Newark students on their waitlist.
- e) Should a waitlist be exhausted for a certain grade level, any open seats will then become available to families through an online direct enrollment system and through the Family Support Center.
- f) Any seats that become open or remain open in the summer of 2019 may be offered to non-Newark residents.
- g) Waitlists will remain available to charter schools for the entire 2019-2020

school year.

2. District Magnet Schools:

- a) Consistent with historical Newark Public Schools practice, district magnet schools will have waitlists for grade levels in which there are more applicants than seats available.
- b) Applicants who submitted an application that included district magnet schools and were not able to be matched to district magnet school that were listed higher than the school they were matched to will automatically be added to the waitlists for those district magnet schools.
- c) Students on waitlists for district magnet schools will be ordered based on the district magnet school's ranking of the student during the application process.
- d) Newark Public Schools will notify families who gain entry into magnet schools off the waitlist should seats at magnet schools become available.

B. Family Enrollment Portal:

1. After the application process has closed and matches have been released, any remaining open seats at participating district and charter schools will be made available to students and their parents/guardians through a direct enrollment online portal for a limited period of time and will close at the start of the 2019-2020 school year.
2. The direct enrollment online portal will display schools that have seat availability by grade level as well.
3. New students or students whose parents/guardians are seeking to change schools may use the direct enrollment online portal to enroll in any school that appears for the grade level needed.
4. During this same time period, parents/guardians wishing for additional support or who are seeking to appeal to enroll in a school for which there is no space may visit the Family Support Center for support.
5. A limited set of students with specific needs may be required to visit the Family Support Center for school placement, including, but not limited to, students with specific learning disabilities that require a specialized placement, students with specific bilingual needs, and students in 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades.
6. The direct enrollment online portal will close in September 2019.
7. The online direct enrollment portal will have features that prevent parents/guardians from making multiple requests for school changes.

C. The Family Support Center

1. The Family Support Center will be open concurrent with the online direct enrollment portal to support families with enrollment for the 2019-2020 school year.
2. By mid-September of the 2019-2020 school year, all new enrollments and transfers will follow the policies outlined below at the Family Support Center:
  - a. Transfer Window & Eligibility: After student matching and the Family Enrollment Portal closes, students who are seeking to change the school with which they have been matched may apply for a transfer through the Family Support Center after completing a Transfer Request Form with an administrator from their child's current school.
  - b. Transfer Criteria: Approvals for transfers will be granted to students if they meet the following reasons and criteria:

- i. Travel Hardship: Appeals are approved if one-way travel is 45 minutes or greater or the student lives 2.0 more miles from the school if students are in grades K-8, and if one-way travel time is 60 minutes or greater or the student lives 2.5 or more miles from the school for students in grades 9-12 (using Google Maps).
  - ii. Personal Safety: Students must provide a student incident report; scanned copy of a police report or court documentation (e.g. restraining order); and/or documentation indicating a Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) determination. Transfers will be granted if there is evidence that a transfer is necessary for a thorough and efficient education in the interest of student safety.
  - iii. Bilingual Services: Students who are eligible for bilingual services and believe that there is a better educational fit for their students' needs and choose to participate in a bilingual program that their matched school or LEA does not provide in the 2019-2020 school year.
  - iv. Data Errors: If the student believes that a data error occurred in the entry of their application or in the entry of their new enrollment or transfer, the error will be reviewed by the System Administrator. In the event that a data error occurred, the System Administrator will attempt to place the student in the most appropriate school possible based on the student's preferences and needs.
  - v. Newark Public Schools has the responsibility to serve each student who lives in the city of Newark if the student chooses to be educated by the district. As such, students attending charter schools have the right to return to a Newark Public School. If a student wishes to transfer from a participating charter school to a district school, resolution between the family and the charter school will be pursued. If the student still wishes to transfer, the student will be required to complete a Transfer Request Form indicating the reason for the transfer request.
  - vi. The transfer process described above does not apply to charter school students who receive special education services in which a change in placement is being considered. The Newark Public Schools can be considered an out of district placement for charter school students whose special education placement may be changed. These placement changes must continue to be managed through the out of district placement process in coordination with the Office of Special Education at Newark Public Schools.
  - vii. Grade level decisions made by a student's previous school will be honored by the student's new school in the event a transfer is granted.
- c. Transfer Notification: Students will be notified on a rolling basis upon submission of documentation and subsequent approval or rejection of the transfer. LEAs will be notified of students who have been approved to transfer out of their school and of students who are transferring into their school via the transfer process.
- d. Transfer Process: Students who are granted transfers will be provided a list of

schools that have seats available. Students, guided by professional guidance counselors, reengagement staff members and other support staff, will select from the list of schools, ensuring that the schools selected will not replicate the reasons for transfers. For example, if a student is granted a transfer based on travel hardship, the student will be guided to select schools that will not create the same travel hardship the student experienced in their current school.

**D. New Students**

1. **New Student Eligibility:** Students who are new to Newark will participate in a process similar to that experienced by existing students. Students who are new to Newark will be informed of available seats in Newark at the Family Support Center. Based on the availability of seats, the student will choose which school to attend and the System Administrator will manually place the student in the school.

**E. Students Returning to the District/Right to Return Policies**

1. **Eligibility:** Students who are returning to Newark after leaving Newark for a period of time may be allowed to return to the school they last attended in Newark pending space availability. This policy does not refer to students who moved to other schools within Newark, including students who moved to non-participating charter schools as well as private and parochial schools in Newark. This policy refers to students who moved out of Newark entirely (i.e. out of the city, the state or the country) and are returning to the city of Newark.
2. **Process:** The System Administrator will engage with LEAs when these cases occur and the LEA will make the final decision about whether the student can return to the school/LEA.

**F. Timeline:**

1. The Family Support Center will work with families on a continuous basis throughout the school year. At the time the Family Enrollment Portal for parents/guardians will open, the Family Support Center will serve as an alternative location for student enrollment.
2. Once the Family Enrollment Portal closes within the first week of the 2019-2020 school year, the Family Support Center will serve as the only vehicle by which new students are enrolled in school and where transfers between participating schools take place.

## **Section 7: Registration**

Registration applies to students who are newly matched to schools through the application process, direct enrollment online portal or the Family Support Center.

- A. New Student Registration Window:** Student registration will begin after students who have applied have been matched with schools. The registration process will be managed by each individual participating LEA. Student registration includes verification of eligibility to attend (residency for all students and age for some grade levels) for students who are currently enrolled in a participating public school in Newark, and will include additional requirements (e.g. immunization records) for those students who are new to Newark.
- B. Verifying Eligibility to Attend**
1. Only students who are living in the city of Newark are eligible to register as Newark residents through the Universal Enrollment System, notwithstanding Section 3.A. Students must live in Newark with their parent(s) or legal guardian(s).

- a) All Newark parents or guardians must prove Newark residency by providing their child's school with three (3) separate documents verifying their home address. Documentation requirements include:
    - i. Three (3) separate documents that list the same home address (Not P.O. Box)
    - ii. At least one of the documents must be issued in 2018.
    - iii. Multiple documents from within the same category will be accepted and counted individually as long as they are from different issuing organizations (e.g.: a cable bill from Comcast and an electricity bill from PSE&G will be counted as two (2) out of three (3) accepted documents).
  - b) Any three (3) of the following documents may be offered to provide eligibility to attend, and a student's residency eligibility should be determined based on the totality of information provided by the parent/guardian: driver's license or identification card; utility bills; employment documents and/or government benefits statement; NJ Division of Elections sample ballot; current lease; domicile affidavit verifying the student lives at the address; property tax or income tax bill; mortgage statement; bank or other financial account statement; ongoing payment obligation issued by a verifiable 3rd party (e.g. car payment, insurance payment, student loan payment, etc.)
2. As described in Section 3.A, an exception to this will be if some participating LEAs have a Region of Residence charter that authorizes them to serve students outside of Newark with equal preference, in which case those participating LEAs may be assigned students living within their designated zones known as "enrollment hubs" as described in Section 4.E. In addition, siblings of students who are currently enrolled in Newark schools and who live outside the city of Newark would still be eligible to enroll in a charter school that their sibling currently attends, to the extent permitted by the charter. Siblings of students who are currently enrolled in a district school and who live outside of the city of Newark would be eligible to enroll in a district school through the universal enrollment process, but will be required to pay tuition to attend the district school. In addition, students who are currently displaced (e.g. homeless, foster care) and not currently residing in Newark have the right to continue their education at their current school in Newark, consistent with federal law. Families that plan to move to Newark within 60 days have the right to enroll their children in school free of tuition so long as the parents/guardians can demonstrate proof of anticipated residency (e.g. lease). After this 60-day period of attending a district school, the district will charge the family tuition until the parent/guardian is able to provide proof of residency.
3. A student's school enrollment offer may be rescinded if the student is not a resident at the time of registration, or does not meet the exception requirements outlined in 3.A and 6.B.4. Applications submitted by non-Newark residents who are interested in attending public schools in Newark will be considered for placement after the application and appeals window close should seats remain open at schools they are eligible to attend, with the exception of those students matched to a Region of Residence charter school.

#### C. Age Verification

1. Age verification for pre-kindergarten 3: The student must turn 3 on or before October 1<sup>st</sup>. Families may provide a birth certificate, passport, or baptismal certificate to confirm age and date of birth.
2. Age verification for pre-kindergarten 4: The student must turn 4 on or before October 1<sup>st</sup>. Families may provide a birth certificate, passport, or baptismal certificate to confirm age and date of birth.
3. Age verification for kindergarten: The student must turn 5 on or before October 1<sup>st</sup>. Families may provide a birth certificate, passport, or baptismal certificate to confirm age and date of birth.
4. A student's school enrollment offer will be rescinded if the student does not meet the minimum age requirements for pre-kindergarten 3, pre-kindergarten 4, or kindergarten.
5. Students who are attending a public school for the first time in Newark will also be required to provide additional information to register for school (e.g. immunization records).

#### D. Registration Expiration

1. There will be one registration timeframe after the student matching process.
2. The registration window will open on the day after students are notified of their school matches and close at the end of the school year.
3. LEAs are expected to reach out to families via multiple channels and multiple times to ensure that students matched have the opportunity to register in school.
4. LEAs must abide by the student registration guidelines outlined in this section. However, LEAs have autonomy in terms of the process by which they register students. For example, some LEAs may choose to have scheduled "registration days" for students and families while others may allow families to register anytime during the registration window.
5. During the registration window, LEAs can determine whether students are registered or intend to register prior to releasing seats to students who have submitted appeals and need a different option, students on the waitlist, or for students who are seeking schools during the walk-in process at the Family Support Center beginning in the summer of 2018 (see Appendix A for the timeline on the waitlist, and walk-in processes).
6. Students who are not registered in school by the registration deadline will be assumed to forfeit the seat if an LEA so chooses. If these students communicate that they intend to attend their matched school after the registration expiration date, the LEA may decide whether they are able to serve the student. If they are not able to serve the student, the student is guaranteed a seat in a district school.

### Section 8: System Administration

- A. Newark Public Schools will serve as the System Administrator of the Universal Enrollment System for the enrollment process for the 2018-19 school year for 2019-2020 enrollment.
- B. Because the assignment algorithm will be programmed by a third party to incorporate all the preference policies outlined in Section 4, the System Administrator will play no active role in the assignment of students through the lottery.

- C. The System Administrator's responsibilities to participating LEAs are:
1. To ensure that the Universal Enrollment System is executed per the terms of this agreement.
  2. To adequately fund the Universal Enrollment System to execute the terms of this agreement.
  3. To staff the Universal Enrollment System with the quality and quantity of personnel necessary to execute the terms of this agreement.
  4. To create and distribute the Universal Enrollment System application.
  5. To host and maintain the technology system used to input application information.
  6. To honor the match target submissions of each LEA, as defined in Sections 3 and 8.
  7. To perform data entry of applications submitted to Newark Public Schools' central office or enrollment centers.
  8. To ensure that application errors, incomplete application information, and duplicate applications are resolved, with the help of each participating LEA.
  9. To ensure that the assignments made by the matching algorithm reflect the policy decisions established by the MOU.
  10. To distribute offers of enrollment to families who have applied, and to provide lists of assignment decisions to each participating LEA, as soon as is practical once the matching algorithm has been run.
  11. By July 2019, to provide the following data summarizing the 2018-19 application and matching process to all participating LEAs:
    - i. Application Submission Summary:
      1. # of total applications submitted overall and by grade span (PK-8; 9-12)
      2. # of applications submitted to each grade – Newark only and all applications
      3. # and % in each grade choosing a charter school as a first choice; # and % in each grade choosing an NPS school as a first choice
      4. # of applications, total and by grade level, submitted by neighborhood hub.
      5. Post application parent/guardian survey data
    - ii. School Demand Summary:
      1. # of students ranking each school 1<sup>st</sup> (Top 12 schools) in the following groups: PK-8, 9-12, K, 5<sup>th</sup> grade, and 9<sup>th</sup> grade
      2. # of students ranking each school 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> (Top 12 schools) in the following groups: PK-8, 9-12, K, 5<sup>th</sup> grade, and 9<sup>th</sup> grade
      3. # of students ranking each school 1<sup>st</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> (Top 12 schools) in the following groups: PK-8, 9-12, K, 5<sup>th</sup> grade, and 9<sup>th</sup> grade
      4. How the charter school compares to top 12 in the above categories
    - iii. Match Results Summary
      1. # of % of students matched to their 1<sup>st</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> choice, manually matched, matched back to current school, or not matched through the application process

2. The above disaggregated by PK-8, 9-12, K, 5<sup>th</sup> grade, and 9<sup>th</sup> grade
- iv. Waitlist Data
  1. By February 2020 % school and family acceptance rates from waitlist to-date.

Discussions regarding a third-party administrator of the universal enrollment process will resume in Spring 2020 for future application cycles.

## **Section 9: Partnership Agreement**

- A. Responsibilities of Participating LEAs – by signing this MOU, each participating LEA agrees to abide by the policies outlined above, as well as the designated responsibilities below:
  1. To honor any offer that is extended to a student (i.e., if a student receives an offer to a school, that is a guarantee of enrollment).
  2. To make all reasonable efforts to enroll every student that is assigned to them through the centralized lottery process (e.g., contact the family multiple times).
  3. To provide accurate and timely school information for inclusion in the application packet and related marketing materials.
  4. To provide their promotion/retention and discipline policies to be included in the Universal Enrollment School Policy Guidebook. The System Administrator will communicate policies to families through, at minimum, an online guidebook.
  5. To make all reasonable attempts to comply in a timely fashion with requests for information and/or support from the System Administrator.
- B. Timeline of the Universal Enrollment Process
  1. The current timeline for the application and student assignment process is included as an Appendix to the MOU.
  2. By signing the MOU, Newark Public Schools agrees to make all reasonable efforts to hold to this timeline, and to inform all participating LEAs as soon as possible in the event of any adjustments to the timeline due to unforeseen circumstances.
  3. This agreement does not dictate the terms, conditions, or timelines for any student recruitment and registration process.
- C. Oversight
  1. All participating LEAs, including NPS, will work together over the course of 2018-2019 to collaborate with a committee on the process to monitor the results of the fifth year of implementation and make recommendations for modification to policies and procedures moving forward for PDC consideration.
  2. This oversight process should include, for example: access to all data (made anonymous) on applications and assignments, community feedback, third party evaluation, and input from participating LEAs.
- D. Opting Out
  1. If a participating LEA determines that Newark Public Schools, as the System Administrator, violates this agreement, it will have the ability to terminate their participation in the Universal Enrollment System if all reasonable attempts at reconciliation have been exhausted.



2. If the Policy Design Committee determines that Newark Public Schools – in its role as System Administrator – is responsible for substantial delays that pose a significant threat to the ability of participating LEAs to enroll students for the 2019-2020 school year, then each participating LEA will have the ability to terminate their participation if all reasonable attempts at reconciliation have been exhausted.
3. If the LEA violates terms of this agreement to the extent that Newark Public Schools believes the conduct of the LEA would threaten the operation of the universal enrollment system or the ability to meet proposed deadlines, Newark Board of Education will retain the ability to terminate this agreement as to that LEA and remove the LEA from the universal enrollment system .
4. In the event that this agreement is terminated, Newark Board of Education will provide to each LEA the following depending on the timing of the termination:
  - If termination occurs before the opening of application window, the LEA will be removed from the application and proceed with its own enrollment lottery as require by law.
  - If termination occurs during the application window, the application process will continue as planned until it closes, and then NPS will provide the LEA the most recent and finalized list of ALL families that have ranked that LEA in the application process.
  - If the matching process has already started, NPS will provide the list of the the students matched to the school, as well as full waitlist, in match order, within 2 weeks of the matching process being completed.

E. Timeline of the Agreement

1. This MOU applies only to student enrollment taking place for the 2019-2020 school year.

**Appendix**

- Appendix A: 2018-2019 UES Application & Matching Process Timeline
- Appendix B: 2018-2019 Geographic Hubs

## Appendix A: 2018-2019 UES Application & Matching Process Timeline

<b>Dates</b>	<b>Enrollment Process Item</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
<b>Monday, December 3 – Friday, February 15</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>All school fair on Saturday, December 10</i></li> <li><i>High School and PreK-K Fair in January</i></li> </ul>	Application Period	11 weeks (including holidays)
<b>Monday, February 18 – Wednesday, February 20</b>	Final Paper Application Entry	3 Days
<b>Thursday, February 21 – Friday, April 12</b>	Data Cleaning / Algorithm Running / Matching / Waitlist Preparation Letter Prep	8.5 Weeks
<b>Monday, April 15</b>	Match Letter & Waitlist Release	
<b>Monday, April 15 – Friday, June 7</b>	School Registration (stated registration period)	7.5 Weeks
<b>~Monday, April 29– Friday, September 13</b>	<p>Online enrollment for families begins <i>School availability subject to change based on registration updates/status.</i></p> <p>Family Support Center will be available to families who need support using the system to enroll students in schools.</p>	~19-20 weeks
<b>Monday, July 1 – Friday, July 5</b>	Data clean-up/rollover/Family Support Center summer training	1 Weeks
<b>Monday, July 8</b>	Family Support Center re-opens 2019-2020 Enrollment	
<b>Monday, September 16</b>	School year transfer policies and processes are implemented at the Family Support Center.	

## Appendix B: Geographic Hubs

Geographic preference will be given to students in the following hubs for the schools that are in the following hubs. Hubs are combinations of recognizable neighborhood boundaries.

Note that Hubs B, F and G are divided into two sub-hubs. Students who live in the sub-hub will have the highest geographic preference to be matched to schools in the sub-hub. Students who live in the complementary sub-hub within the larger hub will also have a preference to these schools, but not as high a preference as those who live in the sub-hub. This is to ensure that students have preference to attend schools close to home, while also ensuring student have access to a sufficient number of school..

### **Hub A:**

Roseville (Upper and Lower)

### **Hub B:**

*Sub-Hub B1*

Mount Pleasant  
Seventh Avenue  
Downtown

*Sub-Hub B2*

Forest Hills  
North Broadway

### **Hub C:**

Ivy Hill  
Vailsburg

### **Hub D:**

Fairmount  
West Side

### **Hub E:**

University Heights  
Springfield/Belmont  
Lincoln Park\*

### **Hub F:**

*Sub-Hub F1*

Ironbound West of Five Corners  
South Ironbound

*Sub-Hub F2*

Ironbound East of Five Corners

### **Hub G:**

*Sub-Hub G1*

Clinton Hill (Upper and Lower)  
Lincoln Park\*

*Sub-Hub G2*

Weequahic (including Dayton)

*\*Students who live near Lincoln Park will have preferences in Hubs E and G given the location of the neighborhood in relation to these two hubs and given the few school options in this neighborhood.*

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have duly executed this Memorandum of Understanding as of the day and year written.

The Newark Board of Education

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: Board President

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

<Charter School Name>

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_